

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SE 02/00079

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC7: B60J 5/04, B60R 19/42

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC7: B60J

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EPO-INTERNAL, WPI DATA

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	SE 501812 C2 (PLANNJA HARDTECH AB), 22 May 1995 (22.05.95)	1
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A	SE 509041 C2 (SSAB HARDTECH AB), 30 November 1998 (30.11.98)	1
	--	
A	US 5542738 A (WALKER ET AL.), 6 August 1996 (06.08.96)	1
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A	US 5887938 A (TÖPKER ET AL.), 30 March 1999 (30.03.99)	1,7
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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

27 March 2002

Date of mailing of the international search report

29-04-2002

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

Swedish Patent Office

Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM

Facsimile No. +46 8 666 02 86

Authorized officer

Hans Nordström / JA A

Telephone No. +46 8 782 25 00

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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PCT/SE 02/00079

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5785376 A (NEES ET AL.), 28 July 1998 (28.07.98) ----- -----	1

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

28/01/02

International application No.

PCT/SE 02/00079

Patent document cited in search report			Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
SE	501812	C2	22/05/95	AU	5122093 A	26/04/94
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				DE	69309699 D,T	24/07/97
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(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
8 August 2002 (08.08.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/060712 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **B60J 5/04**,
B60R 19/42

(21) International Application Number: PCT/SE02/00079

(22) International Filing Date: 18 January 2002 (18.01.2002)

(25) Filing Language: Swedish

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0100356-5 2 February 2001 (02.02.2001) SE

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **SSAB
HARDTECH AB** [SE/SE]; S-971 88 Luleå (SE).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **BODIN, Hans**
[SE/SE]; Tunnlandsvägen 8, S-954 42 Södra Sunderbyn
(SE). **ÅKERSTRÖM, Paul** [SE/SE]; Olovsvägen 8,
S-955 31 Råneå (SE).

(74) Agent: **ÅSLUND, Roland**; SSAB Hardtech AB, S-971 88
Luleå (SE).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU,
AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU,
CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH,
GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC,
LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW,
MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK,
SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA,
ZW.

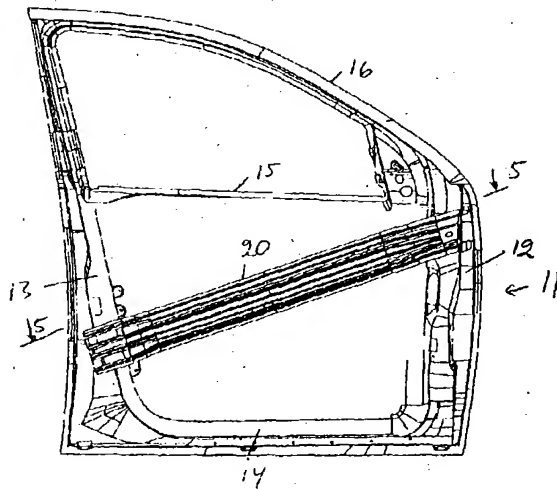
(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM,
KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW),
Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR,
GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent
(BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR,
NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

with international search report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: AN INNER PANEL FOR A VEHICLE DOOR



(57) Abstract: A vehicle door is comprised of a supportive so-called inner panel (11) on which an outer panel is fitted. The inner panel is covered by a loose panel, so-called trim. The inner panel includes a front end wall (12) and a rear end wall (13). A reinforcement beam (20) is fastened between the end walls, such as to be able to transmit force from the door pillar (33) to which the door is attached to the door pillar (34) behind said door, in the event of a collision. The reinforcement beam has a high single hat profile (21) which is fastened to the upper part of the front end wall and extends in a curve out towards the external part of the inner panel, where the profile height is lower. The profile height decreases continuously from the high profile heights to the low profile height and the single hat profile (21) extends into a double hat profile (22). The reinforcement beam also functions as a side impact guard.

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AN INNER PANEL FOR A VEHICLE DOOR

FIELD OF INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to a vehicle door inner panel comprising a front end wall, a rear end wall and a reinforcing beam attached between said walls, such as to enable impact forces emanating from a collision to be transmitted from the door pillar or pillar to which the door is attached to the door pillar situated behind the door.

10 DESCRIPTION OF THE BACKGROUND ART

Car doors are typically comprised of an inner panel, which forms the supportive part of the door, and a lacquered outer panel. The inner panel is covered with a detachable panel, i.e. so-called trim.

15

In the construction of a car, it can be chosen to allow the door to transmit force or load from the A-pillar to the B-pillar, in the event of a frontal collision. A-pillar is the accepted designation of the windscreen-adjacent pillar on which the front door is hung, while B-pillar is the designation of the pillar situated behind the front door, i.e. 20 between the doors when two doors are situated on respective sides.

In order to provide hinge space, these two pillars do not normally reach the outsides of the doors. The beam located beneath the window, the waist rail, is situated on the inside of the window and often overlaps the pillars, so as to be able to transmit force 25 directly between the pillars. However, it is disadvantageous to give this beam a high degree of rigidity or stiffness, since it is desirable for the door to yield in the event of a side-on impact. A side impact guard will preferably be situated as far out in the door as possible, so as to obtain the largest possible deformation zone, and car models exist which have a straight beam or bar which is located on the outside of the side-window 30 guide rails and fixed in bracket means which are welded to the end walls of the inner panel and extend towards the insides of said walls, so as to overlap the pillars and therewith be able to transmit force between the pillars and the side impact beam.

Consequently, the beam is able to transmit force between the pillars, in addition to functioning as a side impact guard.

5 OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to simplify a construction which includes a beam that functions as side impact guard and, at the same time, is capable of transmitting force between the door pillars in the event of a frontal collision. In principle, this
10 object is fulfilled with a reinforcing beam that has a high single hat profile which is attached to the upper part of the front end wall and which curves out towards the outer part of the inner panel where the profile height is lower, wherewith the height of the profile decreases continuously from the high profile height to the low profile height. The invention is characterised by the characteristic features set forth in the
15 accompanying Claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- Figure 1 is an outside side view of an exemplifying embodiment of an inventive
20 inner vehicle door panel.
- Figure 2 is a perspective view of a beam, also shown in Figure 1.
- Figure 3 is a wire model in side view of the beam shown in Figure 2.
- Figure 4 is a sectional view taken on the line 4-4 in Figure 3.
- Figure 5 is a sectional view taken on the line 5-5 in Figure 1, and also shows the
25 A-pillar and the B-pillar of the vehicle.
- Figure 6 is a fragmentary sectional view corresponding to the view of Figure 5 but showing a modified A-pillar, said Figure also showing the attachment of the beam in Figure 2 slightly lower in the A-pillar than that shown in Figure 1.

30 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENT SHOWN IN FIGURE 1

Figure 1 shows the inner panel 11 of a vehicle door as seen from the outside. The inner panel has a front end wall 12, a rear end wall 13, a bottom 14, a beam 15 (waist beam or waist rail) and a window arch 16. The inner panel has a side 17 which faces towards the vehicle interior and which includes a number of holes and recesses. These
5 holes and recesses are not shown in **Figure 1**, but are shown in **Figure 5**. The holes are required for mounting all door fittings. A stiffening or reinforcing beam 20 is fitted between the front end wall and rear end wall and slopes rearwardly.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the beam 20. The front end 21 of the beam has a
10 section in the form of a high-profile hat beam. This high single hat profile extends continually to become a low double hat profile 22, whereby the beam obtains a bend or curve 24 in the transition region 23. The forward end includes attachment tabs 25, 26, 27 which are intended for spot-welding to the front end wall 12. **Figure 3** shows the beam 20 from one side as a wire model, and **Figure 4** shows the double hat profile,
15 which is practically constant over the major part of the length of the beam. It is changed slightly at the rear end, which is adapted for spot-welding to a bracket means 30 attached to the rear end wall, as shown in **Figure 5**, which is a sectional view taken through the inner panel along the beam, as indicated by the line 5-5 in **Figure 1**.

20 The beam 20 is formed from a sheet-metal blank. It can be conveniently shaped and hardened by press hardening, i.e. shaped in cold tools and hardened directly in the tools with said tools functioning as a fixture or jig. Very high mechanical strength values with respect to the steel can be achieved with this method.

25 **Figure 5** shows the A-pillar 33 and the B-pillar 34 of the vehicle. The upper hinge 35 of the inner panel is shown fastened in the A-pillar. The bracket means 30 extends inwards to an extent at which it overlaps the B-pillar and is thus able to transmit load, force, to said pillar in the event of a frontal collision. In the case of a collision of this nature, the force is transmitted from the A-pillar to the beam 20 through the medium
30 of the hinge 35. Also shown in the figure are the window guide rails 37, 38. Although the beam does not obstruct the path of the window, the rear end of the beam cannot be given the same design as the front end of the beam, because the rear guide rail 38 lies

so close to the rear end wall, but must be fastened in a bracket means 30. The beam is shown to slope downwards/rearwards. If the beam were to be given a steeper slope, its rear end can be located beneath the guide rail 38 and therewith enable the rear end of the beam to be given the same design as its front end and the rear bracket means 30
5 omitted. The outer panel of the door has not been shown. However, the outer panel can be folded around the edges 40, 41 of the inner panel and fastened thereto, normally glued thereto.

If the front end of the beam 20 is fastened slightly further down on the front end wall than that shown in Figure 1, i.e. lower than the upper hinge, the front end of the beam
10 and the A-pillar can mutually overlap, as shown in Figure 6, therewith enabling the force to be transmitted directly from the A-pillar to the beam.

As a result of the bend or curve in the hat beam 20, the beam will be strongest in its longitudinal direction when the crown of the curve faces inwardly into the vehicle
15 interior and its open side faces outwards, as shown. If it were turned in the other direction, it would have a stronger function as a side impact guard, although it is normally dimensioned in accordance with axial load and will therefore be sufficiently strong as a side impact guard even when turned to face in the illustrated direction.

20 The illustrated beam has a high single hat profile which merges into a low double hat profile. A low double hat profile is beneficial, since it enables the width of the blank to be utilised and provides a sufficiently strong beam despite the low and open profile. However, the high single hat profile may, alternatively, be allowed to merge into a low single hat profile. However, in this latter case, it is necessary in the majority of cases
25 to reinforce the low single hat profile with some form of cover or to use thicker material. Other profiles are also conceivable on the low part of the beam.

The beam is inclined in the illustrated embodiment of the invention. It is advantageous to take-up the load high up on the A-pillar and transmit the load down to a lower level
30 on the B-pillar, since the vehicle is usually strongest in the vicinity of its floor. Moreover, the beam will have an effective height as a side impact guard with respect to the hips of a passenger or the driver.

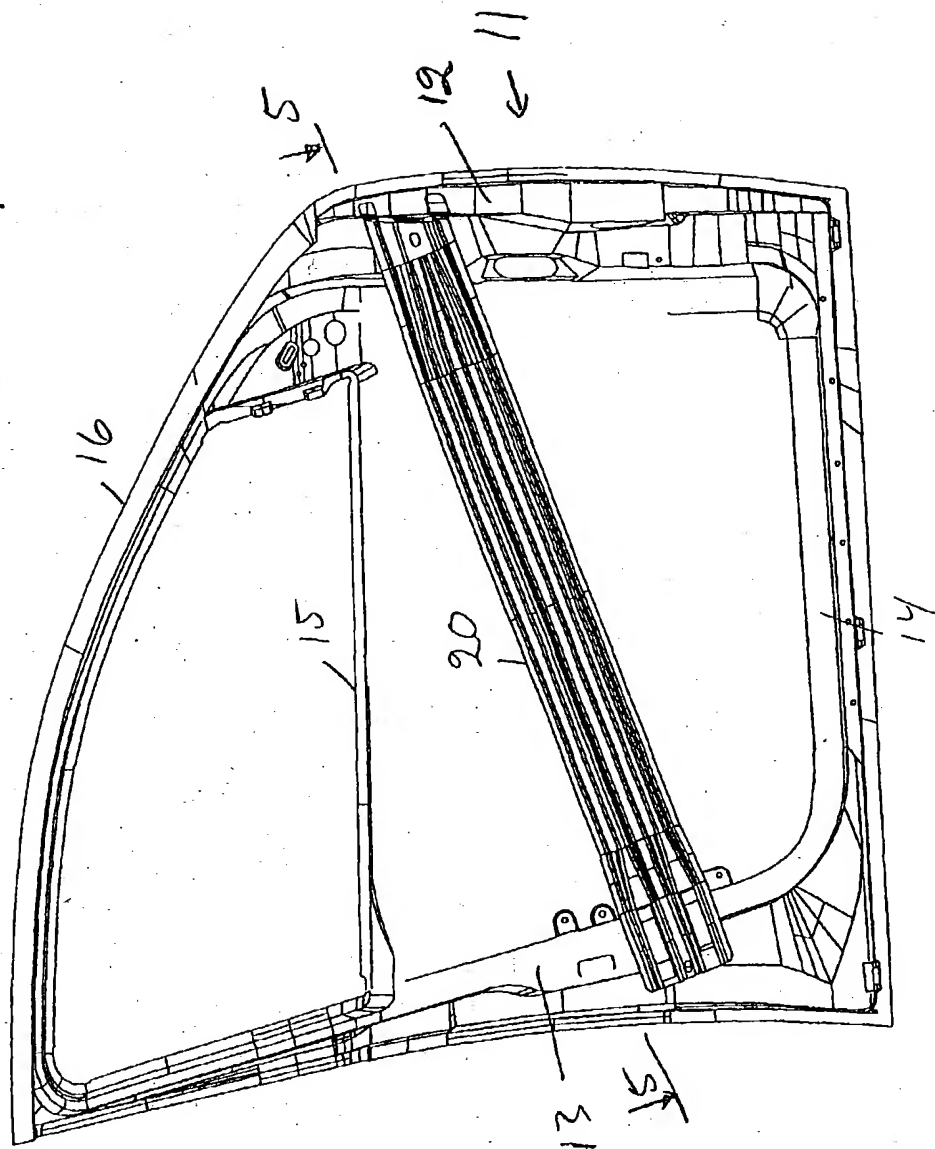
Although the invention is shown as applied to a front door, it can also be applied to a rear door, in which case the beam is able to transmit load from the B-pillar to the C-pillar.

CLAIMS

1. A vehicle door inner panel comprising a front end wall (12), a rear end wall (13) and a reinforcement beam (20) fastened between said end walls such as to be able to transmit force from the door pillar (33) to which the door is fastened to the door pillar (34) situated behind said door, in the event of a collision, **characterised** in that the reinforcement beam (20) has a so-called high single hat profile (21) which is fastened to the upper part of the front end wall (12) and extends into a curve or bend (24) out towards the outer part of the inner panel by virtue of the profile height being lower at that point, wherewith the profile height decreases continuously from the high profile height to the low profile height.
2. An inner panel according to Claim 1, **characterised** in that the high single hat profile (21) extends continuously in a double hat (22) with the lower profile.
3. An inner panel according to Claim 1 or 2, **characterised** in that the reinforcement beam (20) slopes downwards/rearwards.
4. An inner panel according to any one of the preceding Claims, **characterised** in that the inner panel is intended to be hung on the A-pillar (33) of the vehicle and the reinforcement beam (20) is attached at the upper hinge (35) or in the close proximity of said upper hinge.
5. An inner panel according to Claim 4, **characterised** in that the reinforcement beam (20) is attached to the rear end wall (13) of the inner panel, close to the lock.
6. An inner panel according to any one of the preceding Claims, **characterised** in that the inner panel is intended to be hung on the A-pillar (33) of the vehicle and the attachment end (21) of the reinforcement beam in the front end wall (12) of the inner panel overlaps the A-pillar when the door is fitted.

7. An inner panel according to any one of the preceding Claims, characterised in that the hat profile is orientated with the crown facing inwardly of the vehicle.

Fig 1



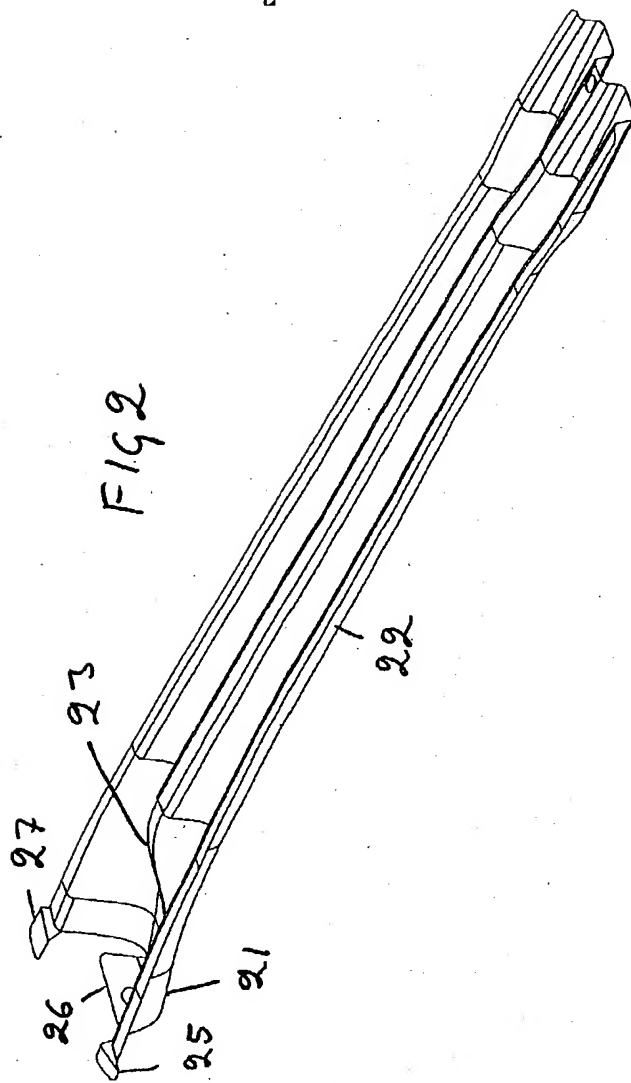


FIG 4

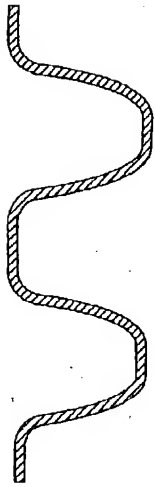


FIG 3

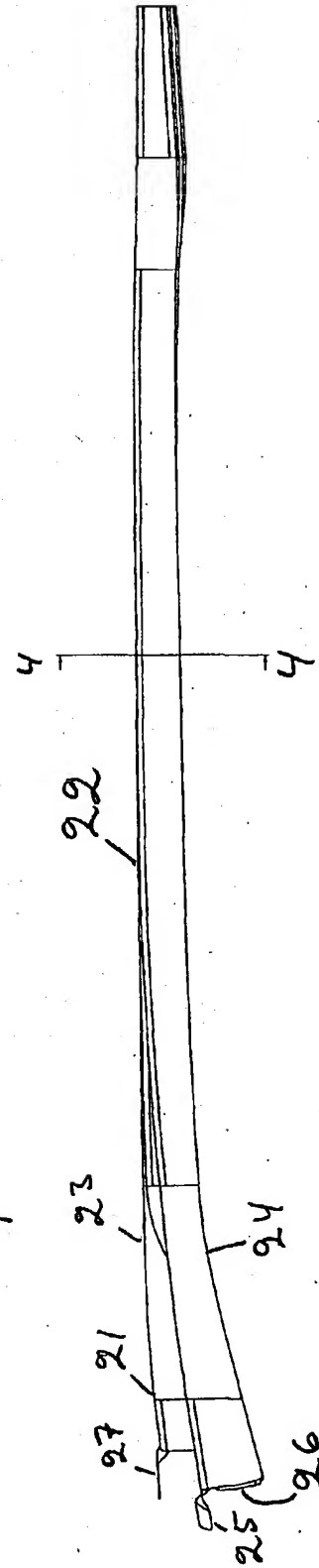


FIG 5

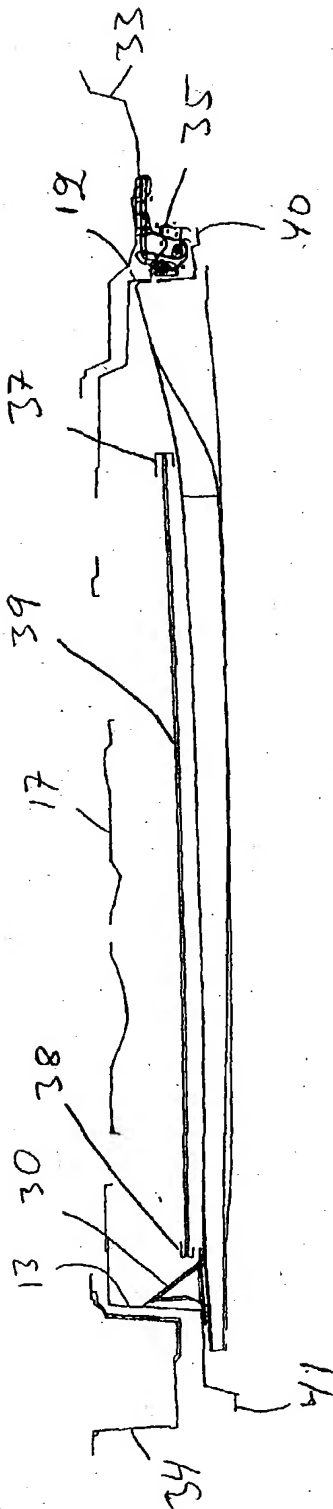


Fig 6

